

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIE-00

INRE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 OMB-01 RSR-01 /076 W

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O R 201920Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0592

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 4010

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, OAS, CU, VE

SUBJECT: VENEZUELAN INITIATIVE ON CUBA

REF: (A) STATE 158486; (B) SAN SALVADOR 3066

1. SUMMARY: GUATEMALAN FONMINISTRY IS IN PROCESS OF DRAFTING RESPONSE TO VENEZUELAN AIDE MEMOIRE IN WHICH IT WILL INFORM GOV THAT GUATEMALA DOES NOT WISH TO COMMENT FOR OR AGAINST VENEZUELAN PROPOSAL. HOWEVER, FONMIN ARENALES INFORMED ME THAT WHILE THIS IS "OFFICIAL" POSITION TO BE CONVEYED TO GOV, WHEN HE HANDS GUATEMALAN RESPONSE TO VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR HE WILL NOTE THAT HE PERSONALLY FEELS THAT VENEZUELAN PROPOSAL IS "INCONVENIENT." IF VENEZUELAN PROPOSAL WERE TO COME TO VOTE IN SOME OAS FORUM, GUATEMALA WOULD STRONGLY SUPPORT POSITION THAT ANY CHANGES IN RESOLUTION IMPOSING SANCTIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE BY A 2/3 MAJORITY VOTE, AND IT WOULD ABSTAIN ON VOTE ON SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE. END SUMMARY.

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2. IN ACCORDANCE INSTRUCTIONS REFTTEL A, WE PRESENTED U.S.

POSITION TO ACTING FONMIN OBIOLS AFTERNOON AUGUST 10 (FONMIN ARENALES WAS VISITING SALVADOR) AND OBIOLS STATED HE WOULD WISH TO CONSULT WITH ARENALES ON THIS QUESTION BEFORE MAKING SUBSTANTIVE COMMENT. WE LEARNED LATER THAT HE CALLED ARENALES IN SALVADOR AND INFORMED HIM OF OUR APPROACH. REFTTEL B ACCURATELY REPORTED ARENALES' ATTITUDE TOWARDS VENEZUELAN INITIATIVE--A POSITION OF ABSTENTION.

3. DURING MEETING WITH ARENALES MORNING OF AUGUST 20, I WENT OVER U.S. OPPOSITION TO VENEZUELAN INITIATIVE AS INSTRUCTED REF A. HE INFORMED ME THAT MINISTRY CURRENTLY DRAFTING RESPONSE TO VENEZUELAN AIDE MEMOIRE, AND THAT GUATEMALA WOULD INFORM GOV THAT IT WAS ABSTAINING FROM MAKING ANY COMMENT FOR OR AGAINST THE VENEZUELAN PROPOSALS. HOWEVER, ARENALES SAID THAT WHEN HE HANDS THE NOTE TO VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR HE INTENDS TO TELL HIM THAT HE PERSONALLY FEELS THE PROPOSALS ARE "INCONVENIENT." GUATEMALA, ARENALES SAID, WILL STRONGLY SUPPORT POSITION THAT 2/3 MAJORITY VOTE IS NEEDED TO ALTER RESOLUTION WHICH IMPOSED CUBAN SANCTIONS. HE REITERATED THAT ON SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE OF MAKING SANCTIONS OPTIONAL GUATEMALA WILL ABSTAIN.

4. ARENALES CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT HE BELIEVED VENEZUELA WOULD NOT HAVE THE VOTES IT NEEDS TO APPROVE ITS PROPOSED RESOLUTION AND THAT AFTER COUNTING NOSES VENEZUELA WOULD NOT MOVE AHEAD WITH ITS INITIATIVE.

5. GUATEMALAN POSITION OF ABSTENTION IS OF COURSE NO SURPRISE TO US. THEY HAVE INFORMED US OF THEIR INTENT TO ABSTAIN ON SUBSTANTIVE QUESTION OF CUBAN SANCTIONS ON PAST SEVERAL OCCASIONS WE HAVE BROACHED QUESTION WITH THEM (GUATEMALA 1204 AND 1402).
BOWDLER

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